

7th February 1924]

Salt.

Salt swamp in Tiruturaipundi.

198 Q.—Mr. C. MARUTHAVANAM PILLAI: Will the hon. the Member for Finance and the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(1) whether there is a large salt swamp in the southern half of Tiruturaipundi taluk, and, if so, whether the same or a portion thereof is used for manufacturing salt;

(2) whether the sea-water gets into the swamp during summer and whether the loose saline mud is drifted year after year into the cultivated areas of the surrounding villages; and

(3) whether any grievances about the same were at any time represented to the Revenue authorities, during jamabandi time, by the land-holders of the affected areas; and if so, what action was taken thereon?

A.—(1) & (2) The following extract from the report of Dr. J. J. L. Ratton written in 1873 gives an account of the phenomenon to which the hon. Member apparently refers:—

“The Vedarniem salt pans are laid out on a large swamp, formed at the base or root of the promontory of Point Calimere, by the action of the Vishagum or storm wave which rises, every year, in May or June, about 2 or 3 feet above the level of ordinary tides and inundates the low ground at the junction of the promontory with the main land.

“This Vishagum wave appears to be a result of the change of wind and sea-current in Palk Strait, which accompanies the outburst of the south-west monsoon. It overruns the whole southern shore of Point Calimere, almost from the point to Adirampatam, a distance of full 40 miles, and settling in the hollow grounds forms a salt swamp of enormous extent. There does not, however, seem to be any sustained elevation of the sea-level along this shore during the monsoon, for at Vedarniem, this year, two or three days after the first appearance of the Vishagum, its waters were in full retreat, and in three weeks' time there was scarcely a vestige of it left.

“The sand and coarse materials carried along in suspension by the Vishagum are deposited first, the clay in fine division being taken to the furthest limit fringing the high ground.”

(3) The Government have no information as to whether the ryots who have extended their cultivations within the range of the Vishagum wave have any grievance in connexion with it. In any case it does not appear that the grievance would be one which it lies within the power of Government to remedy.

The Stella Maris Brine Refining process.

199 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state whether the Stella Maris Brine Refining process has been tried anywhere in the Madras Presidency by themselves or by any private firm and if so, with what results?

A.—So far as the Government are aware the process has not been tried anywhere in this Presidency on a manufacturing scale.